

REMARKS

Prior to an examination on the merits of the above-identified patent application, please enter the foregoing amendments.

Claims 15-27 are pending in the above-identified patent application, as presented in the "*Literal English Translation of P.C.T. Application No. PCT/CH2003/000392*," and as re-drafted and entered by the instant Preliminary Amendment. Claim 15 is the single claim presented in independent form.

The present application represents the U.S. National Phase of P.C.T. Application No. PCT/CH2003/00392, filed June 17, 2003, and claiming foreign priority on the basis of a corresponding Switzerland patent application, filed June 20, 2002. The Basic U.S. National Fees were timely paid on December 20, 2004.

By the present amendments, original Claims 1-14 have been cancelled and substituted by new Claims 15-27, which are intended to conform more closely to U.S. claim practice.

The Specification has been amended to add standard U.S. sectional headings.

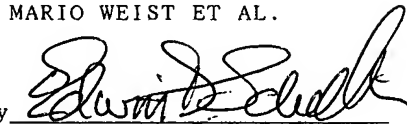
The application is now in condition for a full examination on the merits.

Accordingly, an early examination on the merits and allowance are, therefore, respectfully requested and earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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